

### REMARKS

The applicant has carefully considered the official action dated January 24, 2005, and the references cited therein. In the official action claims 1-27 were rejected as anticipated by Futamura et al. (U.S. 5,563,795). In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, the applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application.

As an initial matter, the applicant wishes to thank Examiners Kauffman and Calvert for the telephonic interview conducted on July 7, 2005. During the interview, the undersigned generally discussed the foregoing amendments with the examiners and, in a subsequent phone message to the undersigned, Examiner Kauffman indicated the proposed amended claims to be patentable over the art of record.

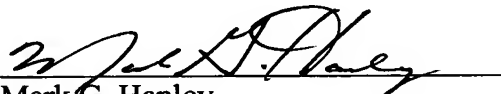
In particular, Futamura et al. fails to teach or suggest classifying an object associated with image data based on distance transform data by extracting a regularity characteristic from the image data, where the regularity characteristic is representative of a variation in thickness of a region defined by the object, as recited in claims 1-27.

As a final matter, the applicant has filed herewith corrected drawings as requested on page 2 of the official action. Specifically, Figures 5, 7, 10, and 14a-16 have been revised to eliminate the shading noted by the examiner.

Accordingly, the applicant submits that this application and all claims pending therein are now in condition for allowance. If the examiner is of the opinion that a further telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this case, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number identified below.

Respectfully submitted,

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